

## IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A powertrain of an automatic transmission, comprising:

- a first planetary gear set having first, second, and third operational elements, the first, second, and third operational elements ~~occupying sequential positions in a lever diagram~~;
- a second planetary gear set having fourth, fifth, and sixth operational elements, the fourth, fifth, and sixth operational elements ~~occupying sequential positions in a lever diagram~~; and
- a third planetary gear set having seventh, eighth, and ninth operational elements, the seventh, eighth, and ninth operational elements ~~occupying sequential positions in a lever diagram~~,

wherein:

- the first operational element is fixedly connected to the fourth operational element and always receives an input torque;
- the second operational element is fixedly connected to the ninth operational element and always outputs an output torque;
- the third operational element is variably connected to the eighth operational element via a second clutch;
- the fifth operational element is always stationary;
- the sixth operational element is variably connected to the seventh operational element via a first clutch;
- the seventh operational element is subject to a stopping operation of a second brake;

and

- the eighth operational element is variably connected to an input shaft via a third clutch and is subject to a stopping operation of a first brake.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The powertrain of claim 1, wherein:

- the first and third planetary gear sets are single pinion planetary gear sets;
- the first, second, and third operational elements are respectively a sun gear, a carrier,

and a ring gear of the first planetary gear set; and

the seventh, eighth, and ninth operational elements are respectively a sun gear, a carrier, and ring gear of the third planetary gear set.

4. (Previously Presented) The powertrain of claim 1, wherein:  
the second planetary gear set is a double pinion planetary gear set; and  
the fourth, fifth, and sixth operational elements are respectively a sun gear, a carrier, and a ring gear of the second planetary gear set.

5. (Previously Presented) The powertrain of claim 1, wherein the first, second, and third planetary gear sets are arranged in the order of the first, third, and second planetary gear sets.

6. (Previously Presented) A powertrain of an automatic transmission, comprising:

a first operational element fixedly connected to a fourth operational element, and configured to always receive an input torque;

a second operational element fixedly connected to a ninth operational element and configured to always output an output torque;

a third operational element variably connected to an eighth operational element via a second clutch;

a sixth operational element variably connected to the seventh operational element via a first clutch; and

a fifth operational element configured to be stationary;

wherein the eighth operational element is variably connected to an input shaft via a third clutch and is subject to a stopping operation of a first brake, and the seventh operational element is subject to a stopping operation of a second brake.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) The powertrain of claim 6, wherein:

the first, second and third operation elements comprise a first planetary gear set;

the fourth, fifth and sixth operational elements comprise a second planetary gear set;  
and  
the seventh, eighth and ninth operational elements comprise a third planetary gear set.

9. (Currently Amended) A powertrain of an automatic transmission, comprising:  
a first planetary gear set having a first sun gear, a first pinion carrier, and a first ring gear that occupy sequential positions relative to each other;  
a second planetary gear set having a second sun gear, a second pinion carrier, and a second ring gear that occupy sequential positions relative to each other;  
a third planetary gear set having a third sun gear, a third pinion carrier, and a third ring gear that occupy sequential positions relative to each other;  
an input shaft; and  
an output shaft;  
wherein:  
said first sun gear is fixed to ~~connected with~~ said second sun gear;  
said first pinion carrier is fixed to ~~connected with~~ said third ring gear;  
said first ring gear is variably connected with said third pinion carrier;  
said second pinion carrier is always stationary;  
said second ring gear is variably connected with said third sun gear;  
said input shaft is fixed to ~~connected with~~ said first sun gear, and ~~said~~ second sun gears gear, and variably connected with said third pinion carrier; and  
said output shaft is fixed to ~~connected with~~ said first pinion carrier and said third ring gear.

10. (Previously Presented) The powertrain of claim 9, wherein said first and third planetary gear sets are single pinion planetary gear sets.

11. (Previously Presented) The powertrain of claim 9, wherein said second planetary gear set is a double pinion planetary gear set.

12. (Previously Presented) The powertrain of claim 9, wherein said first, second, and third planetary gear sets are arranged in the order of the first, third, and second planetary gear sets.